

Environmental Report

June 2021

Environmental Manager Teresa Sidwell

Eradication – During the month of June our CDL licensed Sr. Environmental Officer, Tim Filbeck used the grappling truck to remove waste illegally dumped on the side of county roads outside city limits. We removed a mattress and a large amount of roadside litter next to the lake (pictured top left and top right), two additional mattresses were



removed outside the city of Gentry (pictured bottom left), and a box spring and mattress was removed from the side of the creek on Stoney Point Road outside the city of Rogers (pictured bottom right). All of these mattresses could have been taken to a Special Waste Drop-Off Center in Benton County for free where it would be deconstructed and most of the materials recycled. The Benton County Sheriff's Office has provided inmate labor to deconstruct the mattresses saving county tax payers the cost of disposal at the landfill. You can learn more about this important program by contacting the Solid Waste District at 479-795-0751.





Extra Patrols – For years we have struggled with areas of continual littering and have installed 55-gallon barrels next to “No Littering” signs in some areas to encourage people to throw their litter into the barrel instead of on the ground. This tactic has helped with the addition of cameras to discourage future illegal activity. The cameras are monitored by our officers and rotated to different sites regularly.

Illegal dumping causes suffering beyond the visual. We can yield real results by addressing this issue through education, eradication, and enforcement.

Adopt a Road Cleanup – The Adopt a Road program includes volunteers from service organizations, businesses and families who help make our county cleaner. They adopt sections of the 2,000 miles of Benton County roads and pick up litter twice a year. The Keep Arkansas Beautiful organization and The Clorox Company provide safety vests, trash bags, and gloves. Our division provide disposal of the waste collected, safety signs, litter grabbers and road signs that recognize each group.

The Ventris Neighborhood Association has been a supporter of the County Adopt a Road program since 2011. The neighbors on this road clean up this area twice a year. They went out again in June, picked up 12 large bags of litter and got their road looking good once again. We honestly could not keep our County looking clean without the tireless efforts of our Adopt a Road groups. This group and others volunteer to pick up litter without any expectation of reward.



The **Special Waste Drop-off** is provided by Benton County, the Cities and the Benton County Solid Waste District for recycling and safe disposal of large bulky household items. Limited household items are taken free of charge or for a low cost.



WASTE COLLECTED AT SPECIAL WASTE DROP-OFF

CENTERTON	# LOADS	# NON-REFRIGERATED	# REFRIGERATED	# ELECTRONICS	# METAL	# FURNITURE/OVERSIZED	# HHW	# Tires
January	669	52	52	211	383	492	67	325
February	367	34	14	131	290	315	33	57
March	926	62	58	304	746	759	118	394
April	855	43	43	226	739	710	123	355
May	760	19	39	201	816	638	124	346
June	1,070	42	96	305	1,627	811	208	
Total	4,647	252	302	1,378	4,601	3,725	673	1477
ROGERS	# LOADS	# NON-REFRIGERATED	# REFRIGERATED	# ELECTRONICS	# METAL	# FURNITURE/OVERSIZED	# HHW	# Tires
January	425	20	11	103	645	352	94	572
February	210	1	11	56	262	214	32	130
March	343	11	9	67	296	363	55	285
April	328	11	15	110	441	336	54	439
May	550	27	47	156	448	461	103	447
June	708	50	49	213	775	662	151	
Total	2,564	120	142	705	2,867	2,388	489	1873
SILOAM SPRINGS	# LOADS	# NON-REFRIGERATED	# REFRIGERATED	# ELECTRONICS	# METAL	# FURNITURE/OVERSIZED	# HHW	# Tires
January	53	0	9	42	51	16	18	72
February	50	2	0	48	25	27	17	0
March	61	4	3	42	47	24	15	0
April	61	0	1	36	33	27	24	0
May	38	0	7	25	8	18	14	306
June	89	6	8	49	26	19	34	
Total	352	12	28	242	190	131	122	378

New Waste Provider at Special Waste Drop-Off – The waste provider for this program is bid annually and the original bid was opened in early May. At that time, the county received only one bid. The cost to the county was expected to increase 41%, so we decided to re-bid. In early June we received four bids. The winning bidder for the coming year is Republic Waste and the expected increase in cost is 35%.

We are working on ways to reduce waste costs. Normally we get around 2 tons in a dumpster because items like couches and other furniture are bulky and take up a lot of space. We received a demonstration of a mobile waste compaction service (www.smashmytrash.com) that was able to get 8.96 tons in our dumpster! The service will have a 30-day trial.





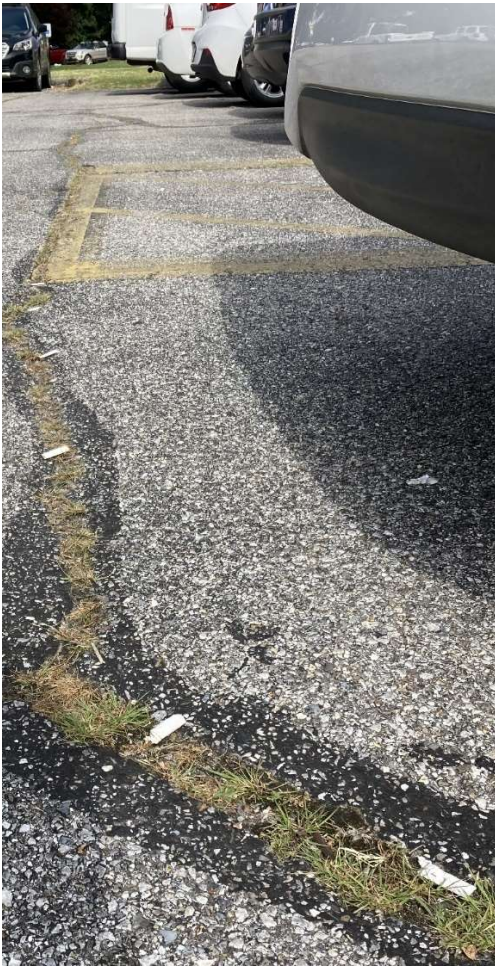
County Teaching Garden – We utilize this garden to promote the benefits of alternative stormwater management of rainfall and pollutants. June flowers were blooming at the garden located at the Road Department on 14th Street in Bentonville.

Education Eradication Enforcement - In order for our division to be successful with protecting the environment, we must utilize the 3E's of environmental protection (Education, Eradication, and Enforcement). We can make our county a safe and healthy place to live for everyone, including communities plagued with illegal dumping.

Our two Environmental law enforcement Officers spend most of their day explaining proper waste disposal to violators. With population growth and awareness, we have seen a significant increase in reports of illegal dumping over the last couple of years. Resources and time invested in each case varies from one visit to as many as twelve visits over the course of a year. Most violators struggle financially, so we give them time to rectify the problem as long as they work to make significant improvements.

We use a grapple truck to remove roadside dumps once a month, install "No Dumping" signs and surveillance cameras in areas of frequent dumping, perform extra patrols in high crime areas, and provide a recycling program for county employees. We provide supplies and support to our Adopt-a-Road groups who help us pick up litter on county roads. We also partner with the Solid Waste District and the Cities to provide Solid Waste Drop-off sites.

Staff Training – in June Officer Sidwell received online training in Cultural Diversity and Stress Management from the Criminal Justice Institute at the University of Arkansas. She also attended an online conference hosted by the Alameda County and the California State Task Force on Illegal Dumping. Alameda County is tackling illegal dumping in much the same way that we strive to do here in Benton County using education, eradication, and enforcement. One of the most powerful speakers at this conference was Ken Houston, the founder of the Beautification Council. You can see his video and others at <https://www.acgov.org/board/district4/idcon21.htm>.



Litter – Environmental education, eradication and enforcement is important to address behavior change and we need to do more. By being proactive instead of reactive, we can make a difference. Research has found that laziness, carelessness, lack of trash receptacles, lenient law enforcement and the presence of litter already in the area are reasons given for littering. As litter degrades, chemicals and microparticles are released. 60% of water pollution is attributed to litter. Animals are innocent victims affected by ingesting or becoming entrapped in improperly discarded trash.

Improperly discarded trash is a breeding ground for bacteria and diseases. Litter can spread germs, diseases, viruses, and parasites. Bacteria and parasites can also be transmitted to humans indirectly through affected animals or insects that come in contact with contaminated litter and then transmit those contaminants to humans.



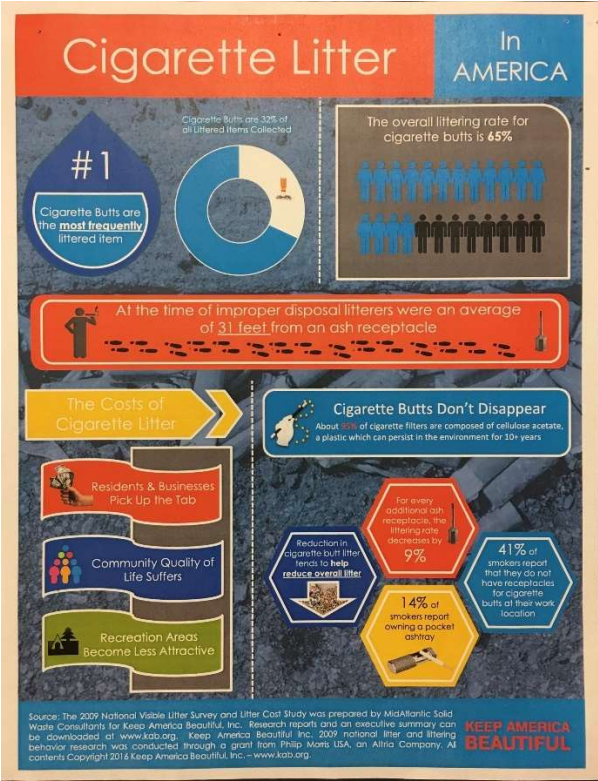
In less than an hour I picked up more than 100 cigarette butts, 8 face masks, a dirty diaper, and other assorted litter from the parking lot at the corner of Central Ave. and SE 'B' St. A clean community will encourage people to live, work and play here.



Enforcement – In June we received 26 new reports of illegal waste disposal. We investigate citizen reports of environmental violations on properties located outside city limits and educate property owners about proper waste disposal, reserving citations as a last resort. Currently, we write citations on only 7.6% of our cases and have 12 cases in the court system.

During June, Officer Filbeck issued two written warnings for littering from a vehicle. He believes that education is key to eradicating litter in Benton County. He educated the drivers about the effects of littering and how something as small as a cigarette butt greatly affects our community. Every driver stopped by an Environmental Officer for littering receives the English/Spanish brochure (pictured right) along with their warning.

Each driver stopped by Officer Filbeck has stated that they didn't realize cigarette butts were litter. 77% of people in a Keep America Beautiful survey said they didn't think of cigarette butts as litter. Cigarette butts are the most littered item in America. Smoker awareness and the lack of available cigarette butt receptacles are the most likely reasons for cigarette butt litter.



Outside the city limits of Gentry, this property owner had a shed damaged in a tornado and the contents were left piled up near a woodline. The property owner completely removed the solid waste to the landfill and recycled the metal.

Drone photography before



Drone photography after



On the south side of Bentonville there was a report of a dilapidated structure, trees down, tall grass and household waste in the yard. The Environmental Division does not regulate tall grass, trees down or dilapidated structures but we were able to get the property owner to clean up the solid waste in a timely manner.

Before



After



UPDATE ON THE MASSIVE TIRE DUMP -

This property (pictured left) located outside the city limits of Siloam Springs east toward Washington County was listed for sale and had a massive tire dump in the ravine along with appliances and other solid waste. Upon recent inspection, Officer Filbeck found that the property owner had removed all of the solid waste.

Case Number	Date Opened	Road Name	Status of Nuisance Cases
13065	3/28/2013	Mulberry Lane, Monte Ne area	Owner abandoned property that progressively declined. After serving a warrant and years in court the property was sold. It is almost completely cleaned up at this time.
18265	11/02/2018	Rhoden Lane, Lowell area	Property has been occupied by drug users since the elderly owner moved. She is now being cared for by her son who stated that he "...does not care what happens to his mother's property..." We have hired a contractor to remove the solid waste.
19332	11/01/2019	Lakeside Drive, Rogers lake area	The owner has been slow to remove waste from a home addition that is falling down. The property was inherited and left unattended for years. Recently the owner secured a contractor to remove the waste.
20203	6/09/2020	Carefree Lane, Lowell area	After much effort to track down the property owners, it was discovered that they had sold the house to relatives in 2002 during their divorce but failed to file proper paperwork with the county. Currently, we are trying to find the people responsible for the large amount of waste on the property.
20319	9/09/2020	Crescent Lane, Monte Ne area	The property owners have been notified of the massive amount of waste surrounding an abandoned mobile home with no door and broken windows. We are in the process of locating the property owners at this time.
20035	2/04/2020	Phillips Road, Lowell area	This abandoned property was discovered last year during a roadside cleanup by our division. The home is severely burned, unsecured and surrounded by solid waste. Recently the property was certified to the state and was purchased for back taxes. The new property owner has agreed to remediate the property.
20120	3/30/2020	Robison Hollow Road, Siloam Springs area	This abandoned property has been used as a dumping ground by others. Initially contact was made with the property owner but recently notifications are being returned unopened and phone calls unanswered. We have scheduled a BCSO inmate crew to assist us in the fall to remove the waste.



ENVIRONMENTAL CASE DATA Refer to the charts for environmental cases received and actions initiated in June.

VIOLATION TYPE	QTY
Burn (appliances)	0
Burn (auto bodies & parts)	0
Burn (construction debris)	0
Burn (electronics)	0
Burn (furniture)	1
Burn (general waste)	2
Burn (household garbage)	3
Burn (mobile home)	0
Burn (tires)	1
Bury (auto bodies & parts)	0
Bury (construction debris)	0
Bury (electronics)	0
Bury (furniture)	0
Bury (general waste)	0
Bury (household garbage)	0
Bury (mobile home)	0
Bury (trees)	0
Dumped by others (appliances)	2
Dumped by others (auto bodies & parts)	0
Dumped by others (construction debris)	1
Dumped by others (electronics)	0
Dumped by others (furniture)	4
Dumped by others (general waste)	4
Dumped by others (household garbage)	2
Dumped by others (metal)	0
Dumped by others (mobile home)	0
Dumped by others (tires)	1
Dumped by others (trees)	0
Dumped by self (appliances)	1
Dumped by self (auto bodies & parts)	1
Dumped by self (construction debris)	0
Dumped by self (electronics)	0
Dumped by self (furniture)	0
Dumped by self (general waste)	1
Dumped by self (household garbage)	2
Dumped by self (metal)	0
Dumped by self (mobile home)	0
Dumped by self (tires)	1
Dumped by self (trees)	0
OTHER	QTY
Agency Assist	1
Camera	0
Extra Patrol	2
Littering	5
Sign installation	2
Stagnant Water	0

ACTIONS TAKEN THIS MONTH	QTY
NOTICE OF VIOLATIONS ISSUED	0
WARNINGS ISSUED	0
CITATIONS ISSUED	2
WARRANTS ISSUED	0
COURT APPEARANCES	0
CASE STATUS	QTY
CASES OPENED THIS MONTH	26
TOTAL NUMBER OF CASES OPENED YTD	214

What does the Environmental Division Investigate?

Environmental Officers are limited to enforcement of solid waste violations in unincorporated Benton County and do not regulate inside any city limits.

We DO NOT investigate septic issues, structure fires, agricultural waste, dead animals such as pets or wild animals, or the illegal disposal of hazardous material.

Our Division responds to violations of solid waste regulations that may include;

1. Construction or operation of a solid waste disposal facility or disposal site.
2. Dumping of solid waste upon property owned by another person.
3. Dumping of solid waste on the side of public roads or public property.
4. Solid waste on one's own property that can potentially create a public nuisance or health hazard.
5. Dumping of solid waste into a waterway.
6. Burning of solid waste.
7. Burying of solid waste.

